

## **Assembly Bill No. 957**

### **CHAPTER 53**

An act to amend Section 129 of the Code of Civil Procedure, relating to courts.

[Approved by Governor July 3, 2013. Filed with Secretary  
of State July 3, 2013.]

#### **LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST**

AB 957, Wagner. Postmortem photographs.

Existing law prohibits making a copy, reproduction, or facsimile of a photograph, negative, or print of the body of a deceased person taken by, or for, the coroner at the scene of death, or in the course of a post mortem examination or autopsy, except for use in a criminal proceeding that relates to the death of that person or by order of the court for good cause, as specified. This provision does not apply to making a copy, reproduction, or facsimile for use in the field of forensic pathology, in medical or scientific education or research, or by any law enforcement agency.

This bill would additionally prohibit the dissemination of a copy, reproduction, or facsimile described above, except as provided. The bill would exclude from application of this provision the making or dissemination of a copy, reproduction, or facsimile for use in the field of forensic pathology, in medical or scientific education or research, and by a coroner or any law enforcement agency for investigative purposes, including identification and identification confirmation. The bill would provide that a coroner is not personally liable for monetary damages in a civil action for any act or omission in compliance with these provisions.

*The people of the State of California do enact as follows:*

SECTION 1. Section 129 of the Code of Civil Procedure is amended to read:

129. (a) Notwithstanding any other law, a copy, reproduction, or facsimile of any kind of a photograph, negative, or print, including instant photographs and video recordings, of the body, or any portion of the body, of a deceased person, taken by or for the coroner at the scene of death or in the course of a post mortem examination or autopsy, shall not be made or disseminated except as follows:

(1) For use in a criminal action or proceeding in this state that relates to the death of that person.

(2) As a court of this state permits, by order after good cause has been shown and after written notification of the request for the court order has

been served, at least five days before the order is made, upon the district attorney of the county in which the post mortem examination or autopsy has been made or caused to be made.

(b) This section shall not apply to the making or dissemination of a copy, reproduction, or facsimile for use in the field of forensic pathology, in medical or scientific education or research, or by a coroner or any law enforcement agency in the United States for investigative purposes, including identification and identification confirmation.

(c) This section shall apply to a copy, reproduction, or facsimile, and to a photograph, negative, or print, regardless of when it was made.

(d) A coroner is not personally liable for monetary damages in a civil action for any act or omission in compliance with this section.